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PROPOSED MEDIUM-TERM PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 1998-2001

Programme 1. Political affairs

CONTENTS

	Paragraphs	Page
Programme 1. Political affairs	1.1 - 1.38	2
Subprogrammes:		
1.1 Prevention, control and resolution of conflicts	1.5 - 1.10	3
1.2 Assistance and support to the Secretary-General in the political aspects of his relations with Member States	1.11 - 1.12	4
1.3 Disarmament	1.13 - 1.18	4
1.4 Electoral assistance	1.19 - 1.21	5
1.5 Security Council affairs	1.22 - 1.25	6
1.6 General Assembly affairs	1.26 - 1.32	7
1.7 Question of Palestine	1.33 - 1.38	8

96-11662 (E) 130596 150596

1.1 The overall objectives of the programme are to assist States involved in disputes or conflicts to resolve their differences peacefully in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and, wherever possible, to prevent conflicts from arising. The programme is of particular relevance in meeting the challenge to promote peace in a dynamic context of globalization, democratization, marginalization and fragmentation.

1.2 The Department of Political Affairs is responsible for the implementation of this programme and for the achievement of its objectives. Subsumed under programme 1 are elements that formerly constituted subprogrammes 1, Good offices, preventive diplomacy and peacemaking, and 3, Research, collection and analysis of information, of programme 1, Good offices, preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peace-keeping, research and the collection and analysis of information; programmes 2, Political and Security Council affairs; 3, General Assembly affairs; 4, Special political questions, trusteeship and decolonization; 5, Question of Palestine; and 7, Disarmament, of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, as revised.

1.3 The mandate for programme 1 lies in the responsibilities entrusted to the Secretariat in the Charter of the United Nations, including Article 99 thereof, by the General Assembly in its recent resolutions 47/120 A of 18 December 1992, entitled "An Agenda for Peace: preventive diplomacy and related matters" and 47/120 B of 20 September 1993, entitled "An Agenda for Peace"; and by the Security Council, as well as in other resolutions of those bodies in the fields of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-building, disarmament affairs, electoral assistance and the provision of secretariat services to principal organs.

1.4 Accordingly, execution of this broad programme will require:

(a) Monitoring, analysing and assessing political developments throughout the world;

(b) Identification of potential or actual conflicts in whose control and resolution the United Nations could play a useful role;

(c) Recommendations to the Secretary-General on appropriate action in cases referred to in (b) above and executing or assisting in the execution of the approved policy;

(d) Assistance to the Secretary-General in carrying out activities decided on by him and/or mandated by the General Assembly and the Security Council in the areas of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peace-keeping and peace-building, including arms limitation and disarmament;

(e) Providing the Secretary-General with analysis, assessment and advice on all disarmament matters and carrying out the responsibilities entrusted to the Secretariat in the field of arms limitation and disarmament;

(f) Providing the Secretary-General with advice on requests for electoral assistance and implementing or coordinating the implementation of such programmes;

(g) Providing the Secretary-General with support in the political aspects of his relations with Member States;

(h) Provision of secretariat services to the General Assembly, the Security Council and their subsidiary organs, as well as the Trusteeship Council if the need arises.

Subprogramme 1.1 Prevention, control and resolution of conflicts

1.5 In recent years, there has been a dramatic increase in activities related to the maintenance of peace and security as a result of which the Secretary-General has been requested to play a proactive role. The primary objective of this subprogramme, which is implemented by the regional divisions of the Department, is to support the Secretary-General in the discharge of his responsibilities to assist in preventing, controlling and resolving conflicts around the world.

1.6 A second objective is to monitor political developments worldwide, so as to provide early warning of impending conflicts. The Secretary-General is to be advised on measures to prevent, contain or resolve such conflicts. He is to be assisted in undertaking preventive, peacemaking and peace-building activities as approved by the relevant intergovernmental bodies.

1.7 The Department of Political Affairs will collect information about potential and actual disputes and conflicts, analyse information to identify situations in which the United Nations could play a useful role and advise the Secretary-General on what form the action may take. The Department will prepare reports to intergovernmental bodies and implement approved policies. It will also coordinate and collaborate with other departments in the Secretariat, in particular, the Department of Peace-keeping Operations and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, as well as various United Nations programmes and agencies and regional arrangements and organizations, so that the relevant departments function as an integrated whole under the authority and control of the Secretary-General to address complex issues of a multifaceted nature. The Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peace-keeping Operations and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs have developed a flow chart of actions - information-sharing, consultations and joint action - for the coordination of their respective activities in the planning and implementing of complex operations in the field. This mechanism, known as the "framework for coordination", covers the departments' activities during routine monitoring and early-warning analysis, assessment of options for preventive actions where possible, fact-finding, planning and implementation of field operations, and conduct of evaluations or lessons-learned exercises. The Department of Political Affairs will assist in enhancing the capacity of regional organizations in early-warning and preventive peacemaking and peace-building activities and facilitate close cooperation and coordination in those matters.

1.8 Activities of the subprogramme will also involve assistance in the preparation of, and participation in, special missions (fact-finding, goodwill, good offices) dispatched by the Secretary-General. Special attention will be paid to the provision of guidance and support to special representatives and special envoys in the field of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and

peace-building. Direct executive responsibility for United Nations missions in the field (other than peace-keeping operations), the primary purpose of which is to prevent, contain or resolve conflicts through peaceful means, rests with the Department.

1.9 The nature of the Organization's involvement in special missions is influenced by the evolution of international situations and is undertaken primarily at the request of the General Assembly or the Security Council and States. It is anticipated that, during the period 1998-2001, activities undertaken on the initiative of the Secretary-General will enhance his overall preventive and peacemaking capabilities in the maintenance of peace and security.

1.10 In implementing the subprogramme, the Department will strive in particular to reinforce the Organization's capacity for early warning and quiet diplomacy and for non-military measures to prevent disputes from escalating into conflicts, as well as for resolving those which have erupted. The Department will also endeavour to enhance its capacity with regard to the political aspects of peace-building, especially the definition of the political objectives of peace-building activities and their planning and coordination.

Subprogramme 1.2 Assistance and support to the Secretary-General in the political aspects of his relations with Member States

1.11 The primary objective of this subprogramme, which is implemented by the regional divisions of the Department, is to provide the Secretary-General, continuously, with information, analyses and policy advice to facilitate the political aspects of his relations with Member States. As demand increases for the Organization's services in the maintenance of peace and security, so does interaction between the Secretary-General and representatives of Member States, regional arrangements and organizations, and non-governmental organizations. Interaction involves the support that the Secretary-General provides to Member States in preventing, controlling and resolving conflicts and the support that Member States provide to the Secretary-General in his efforts to that end.

1.12 The Department will prepare background briefs, talking points and profiles for meetings of the Secretary-General. It will also prepare drafts of the Secretary-General's correspondence on political issues with States, intergovernmental bodies and non-governmental organizations. The Department maintains and will further develop a central database related to peace and security issues for use by the Secretary-General and senior officials. Contact with regional organizations, relevant non-governmental organizations and other private academic and research institutes will also be maintained as part of this subprogramme to assist the Secretary-General in his political contacts with Member States.

Subprogramme 1.3 Disarmament

1.13 The positive changes seen recently in international relations have facilitated the search for consensus on a number of outstanding disarmament issues. In particular, the positive outcome of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear

Weapons has opened up a more promising path to nuclear disarmament. However, problems related to conventional weapons, especially the proliferation of small arms, including anti-personnel landmines, and illicit trafficking in nuclear materials continue to pose a threat to international security.

1.14 The first objective of this subprogramme is to provide organizational and substantive secretariat support to multilateral bodies entrusted with deliberation and/or negotiation on disarmament issues and to review conferences and other international meetings related to multilateral disarmament agreements. The Centre for Disarmament Affairs is responsible for implementing this subprogramme.

1.15 A second objective of this subprogramme is to monitor and assess current and future trends in the field of disarmament and international security in order to render assistance to the Secretary-General and Member States in their search for appropriate solutions. This would address post-disarmament problems, including the economic and social consequences of disarmament, environmental damage and conversion, which continue to present a challenge for the international community. Particular attention will be paid to the maintenance of the Register of Conventional Arms and its possible regional variants, as important confidence-building measures.

1.16 A third objective will be to promote regional disarmament efforts and initiatives as an essential component of preventive diplomacy and peace-building. Regional solutions will be more vigorously pursued as regional conflicts increasingly pose a threat to peace and security. Regional dialogue on crucial disarmament and security issues will be advanced through the organization of conferences. Member States will be assisted in addressing specific disarmament concerns through the provision of training and advisory services.

1.17 A fourth objective will be to provide impartial, factual information on the disarmament efforts of the United Nations to Member States, parliamentarians, research and academic institutions, and specialized non-governmental organizations through the programme of publications of the Centre and by providing access to its disarmament database.

1.18 This subprogramme is expected to enable Member States to conduct deliberations and negotiations on disarmament issues in a smooth and efficient manner; facilitate the task of the Secretary-General in the conduct of his relations with Member States on disarmament matters; contribute to an integrated approach to issues relating to the maintenance of peace and security using disarmament as a tool of preventive diplomacy and peace-building; and facilitate an exchange of ideas between governmental and non-governmental sectors with a view to promoting a better understanding of the United Nations endeavours in the field of disarmament.

Subprogramme 1.4 Electoral assistance

1.19 The main objective of this subprogramme is to render electoral assistance to Member States, on their request, through provision of necessary technical and advisory support in coordinating their electoral activities. Activities in the

field of electoral assistance have been carried out by the Electoral Assistance Division in response to General Assembly resolution 46/137 of 17 December 1991 and its successive resolutions, namely, resolutions 47/130 and 47/138 of 18 December 1992, 48/131 of 20 December 1993, 49/190 of 23 December 1994 and 50/185 of 22 December 1995, in which it requested the Secretary-General to provide the Division with adequate resources to carry out its mandate.

1.20 The subprogramme will coordinate electoral assistance activities within the United Nations system and with regional, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. Guidelines and operational manuals on electoral assistance will be further developed and a roster of international experts on electoral issues will be maintained and developed. The institutional memory on electoral assistance activities will be enhanced.

1.21 During the period covered by the plan, this subprogramme will contribute to an integrated approach to the maintenance of peace and security by employing electoral assistance as an essential tool of the preventive, peacemaking and peace-building activities of the Secretary-General. The subprogramme will continue to provide electoral assistance to requesting Member States with a view to assisting and strengthening domestic monitors and to providing support to international observers through coordination of their activities. The subprogramme will also focus on strengthening national capacity to organize and conduct democratic elections on a regular basis.

Subprogramme 1.5 Security Council affairs

1.22 The primary objective of this subprogramme is to provide authoritative advice and substantive services to the Security Council and its subsidiary organs in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the provisional rules of procedure of the Council and its past practice. The Security Council Affairs Division will facilitate liaison with presiding officers and members, prepare reports, analyse and research material, follow up the implementation of the Council's decisions and maintain contacts with organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations.

1.23 Given the unpredictable and urgent nature of the myriad of issues that face the Security Council, the provision of effective and continuous services, having regard to Article 28 of the Charter, is of paramount importance. To this end, effective and timely submission of the Council's parliamentary documentation, reports and communications for processing and their timely issuance in accordance with the relevant decisions of the Council and its programme of work will be ensured. Effective coordination of the meetings of the Security Council, its subsidiary organs and working groups and substantive support services provided to fact-finding missions dispatched by it will also continue to be ensured.

1.24 The various sanctions committees and other subsidiary organs and informal working groups of the Security Council will be provided with authoritative advice and substantive services. The Division will continue to be responsible, in particular, for the expeditious processing of applications from Member States for exceptions for humanitarian supplies in accordance with the procedures established by the various sanctions committees.

1.25 In addition, preparation of analytical studies on the implementation and application of the Charter of the United Nations, the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council for the pertinent supplements to the Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council and on 44 Articles of the Charter of the United Nations for inclusion in the Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs, will be undertaken.

Subprogramme 1.6 General Assembly affairs

1.26 The major objective of this subprogramme is to ensure, through the provision of authoritative advice and substantive services, the orderly and procedurally correct conduct of the meetings and the work of the General Assembly, its General Committee and its Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the rules of procedure and established practice of the Assembly. The General Assembly Affairs Division will prepare analytical studies on the rules and procedure of the Assembly and conduct consultations with its President, the presiding officers of the Main Committees, Member States and intergovernmental bodies for the effective scheduling of meetings.

1.27 To facilitate the organization and conduct of the meetings of the General Assembly, the Division will prepare the necessary parliamentary documentation and ensure the correct and duly authorized submission of reports and communications for processing as official General Assembly documents, as well as their timely issuance in accordance with the practice, programme of work and schedule of the Assembly.

1.28 The General Assembly Affairs Division will also conduct consultations and coordinate the assignment of responsibilities for the implementation of all General Assembly resolutions and decisions and follow up to ensure timely action by relevant bodies.

1.29 The fourth objective of the subprogramme is to provide technical advice and substantive services to subsidiary organs and various informal working groups of the whole that have been established by the Assembly to consider major issues that will impact on the work of the Organization.

1.30 The fifth objective of this subprogramme is to provide, in accordance with established practice and the relevant rules of procedure of the General Assembly, substantive services to the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and to follow up the implementation of relevant resolutions of the Assembly.

1.31 This subprogramme will provide the required substantive services and prepare reports of the Trusteeship Council if it should meet, in accordance with its rules of procedure.

1.32 Under this subprogramme, the General Assembly Affairs Division will also prepare analytical studies on the interpretation of relevant articles of the Charter of the United Nations for inclusion in the Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs.

Subprogramme 1.7 Question of Palestine

1.33 The question of Palestine was first considered by the General Assembly at its second session in 1947. By its resolution 3376 (XXX) of 10 November 1975, the Assembly established the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, and requested it to consider and recommend to it a programme of implementation designed to enable the Palestinian people to exercise their rights.

1.34 A major objective of this subprogramme is therefore to assist the Committee and the concerned States in the promotion of a solution to the question of Palestine based on the exercise by the Palestinian people of their inalienable rights. The Division for Palestinian Rights is responsible for providing secretariat services in support of this subprogramme.

1.35 A second objective of the subprogramme will be to assist the Committee in promoting the effective implementation of the agreements reached between the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization and mobilizing international support for and assistance to the Palestinian people during the transitional period. This responds to the positive developments in the negotiations between the Government of the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization since 1993 upon the signing of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements in September 1993, which gave rise to renewed hopes for a final settlement and opened new possibilities for supportive action by the United Nations.

1.36 A third objective will be to encourage interaction and exchange of ideas that would further the search for a solution to the question of Palestine, by providing forums to facilitate consideration of all issues relevant to the solution of the question by Governments, United Nations bodies, non-governmental organizations and prominent personalities, including Palestinians and Israelis.

1.37 The United Nations computer-based information system on the question of Palestine (UNISPAL) will continue to be expanded. Coordination will be carried out with relevant departments, organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations and the specialized agencies with regard to certain publications on the question of Palestine and UNISPAL.

1.38 The General Assembly, in its resolution 50/84 A of 15 December 1995 on the question of Palestine, reaffirmed the permanent responsibility of the United Nations with respect to the question. The Assembly will therefore continue to renew the relevant mandates until the issue is resolved. Within that context, it is expected that activities carried out under the subprogramme would enhance understanding of the situation with regard to the question of Palestine, thereby contributing to the formulation of policies to resolve this question.

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PROPOSED MEDIUM-TERM PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 1998-2001

Programme 2. Peace-keeping operations

CONTENTS

	Paragraphs	Page
Programme 2. Peace-keeping operations	2.1 - 2.21	2
Subprogrammes:		
2.1. Executive direction and policy	2.7 - 2.11	4
2.2. Operations	2.12 - 2.14	4
2.3. Field administration and logistics support ..	2.15 - 2.17	5
2.4. Planning	2.18 - 2.21	5

96-11668 (E) 140596 160596

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2.1 Peace-keeping remains a dynamic and demanding activity of the United Nations, even though the absolute number of military, police and civilian personnel in the field has declined from the peak of over 80,000 reached in September 1994. While the number of operations in the field (currently 17) may decline in the medium term, given the unpredictability of world politics under the combined pressures of globalization, marginalization and fragmentation, this could also increase. The types of conflicts and circumstances in which peace-keepers are deployed, as identified by the Secretary-General in his Supplement to An Agenda for Peace, is not likely to change. As a result of fragmentation trends, most of today's conflicts are within States, fought not only by regular armies, but also by militias and armed civilians with ill-defined chains of command. They are sometimes marked by the collapse of state institutions and a breakdown of law and order. Cease-fire agreements, when achieved, are often fragile. Humanitarian emergencies are commonplace, exacerbated by the tendency of warring parties to obstruct relief efforts. Negotiated peace settlements, when reached, must cover a wide range of military, political, humanitarian and other civilian matters. They are not self-executing: sustained and intensive efforts by United Nations peace-keeping missions are essential to ensure compliance. For the settlements to endure, long-term programmes are required to address the root causes of the conflict and promote reconciliation.

2.2 Thus, while the recent phase of rapid expansion of peace-keeping may have halted for a time, the first purpose of the United Nations as derived from Article 1 of the Charter of the United Nations, the maintenance of peace and security, will not end. Many existing operations will continue, and the Security Council is likely to mandate new ones depending on how current unstable situations unfold.

2.3 The Department of Peace-keeping Operations acts as the operational arm of the Secretary-General for United Nations field operations. The Department has primary responsibility for managing, directing and supporting all peace-keeping operations that the Security Council or the General Assembly establish and for providing administrative and logistics support to good offices, preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and humanitarian missions, as required.

2.4 The legislative authority for the programme derives from the resolutions and decisions, in particular those of the Security Council, that relate to specific operations, as well as General Assembly resolutions on the comprehensive review of the whole question of peace-keeping operations in all their aspects, the most recent of which is resolution 50/30 of 6 December 1995.

2.5 The main characteristics of current and future operations may be identified as follows:

(a) Demanding mandates. The United Nations will continue to be responsible for operations in which it interposes troops to monitor a cease-fire and/or buffer zone. It will also continue to be called upon to deal with multidimensional operations, in which the United Nations is involved in a wide range of military and civilian matters. Even consent-based operations will likely entail politically and militarily demanding tasks in view of the complex situations in which they are deployed;

(b) Multiple tasks. Recent peace-keeping operations included monitoring cease-fires and buffer zones, protecting humanitarian convoys, disarming and demobilizing ex-combatants, reforming military establishments, demining, establishing police forces, organizing or monitoring elections, monitoring human rights, promoting electoral and judicial reform, promoting aspects of civil administration and coordinating economic rehabilitation. The United Nations must maintain a capacity to discharge these functions effectively;

(c) Active collaboration. The Department must preserve and develop the capacity to conduct operations in collaboration with or in proximity to a number of other international actors, including regional and subregional organizations, multinational coalitions, United Nations relief and development programmes, missions established by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, field offices of specialized agencies, commissions of inquiry, international tribunals and non-governmental organizations.

2.6 In order to be able to fulfil mandates, the programme will pursue as an overall objective the maintenance and enhancement of a flexible capacity to undertake peace-keeping operations. The programme must, therefore, include:

(a) The formulation of policies, procedures and operational concepts, and the preparation of the reports of the Secretary-General thereon to the Security Council and the General Assembly, as mandated;

(b) The provision of executive direction on a daily basis to heads of mission and force commanders, as well as administrative and logistic support for peace-keeping and other operations in the field;

(c) The formulation of resource requirements for submission to the Controller;

(d) The development of secure military, police and civilian personnel from a wide group of Member States;

(e) The development of operational plans involving military, police and civilian components;

(f) The liquidation of operations after they terminate, which includes arrangements for the repatriation of personnel and equipment, disposal of assets, processing of contingent-owned equipment claims and the proper handling of contract and other disputes;

(g) The undertaking of generic contingency planning;

(h) The maintenance of continued contact with the parties to the conflict, members of the Security Council and troop contributors on the implementation of mandates;

(i) The maintenance of a capacity for innovation, conceptual development, training, the standardization of procedures and the ongoing development of tools for the management of peace-keeping assets, personnel and finances.

Subprogramme 2.1 Executive direction and policy

2.7 The objective of the subprogramme is to provide and establish overall authority for all policies and decisions at the programme level relating to the establishment and conduct of peace-keeping operations, as well as to be the focal point for contacts between the Secretariat and Member States, to provide advice to the Secretary-General on the military implications of United Nations resolutions, plans and proposals for operations in the field and to provide guidance and supervision on military matters to all the military officers of the Department.

2.8 Another objective will be to expedite, complement and amplify the information flows generated in the field to senior officers of the Department; to maintain around-the-clock communications links with all missions, solicit information from the field and summarize incoming information; to provide daily briefings to senior managers; and to maintain a crisis management and task force area capable of operating at very short notice.

2.9 A further objective will be to provide in-depth research and analysis of emerging policy questions in the field of peace-keeping and to coordinate at the programme level in the formulation of peace-keeping policies and procedures. Services would also be provided to the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations and various ad hoc intergovernmental committees on issues relating to peace-keeping.

2.10 The subprogramme is expected to maintain and, to the extent possible, enhance the professional capacity of the Organization in the provision of military advice for the planning and conduct of peace-keeping operations, particularly in complex settings; to create an integrated communications and information management system linking field missions and Headquarters units in order to enhance immediate communications and to ensure that information can be easily retrieved for purposes of lessons-learned studies and related analysis; and to provide a pallet of communications tools, including video teleconferencing, to enhance crisis decision-making. The subprogramme is also expected to provide forward-looking analysis of doctrinal challenges that will continue to face peace-keepers for the foreseeable future.

2.11 The subprogramme is implemented by the Office of the Under-Secretary-General, which consists of the Under-Secretary-General for Peace-keeping Operations, the Military Adviser's Office, the Policy and Analysis Unit, the Situation Centre and the Executive Office.

Subprogramme 2.2 Operations

2.12 The objective of this subprogramme is to ensure the overall success of an operation. It is implemented by the Office of Operations, which will deal with parties to conflicts, members of the Security Council and troop contributors, as well as relevant regional organizations (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Organization of African Unity, the Organization of American States, etc.). It will also discharge the Secretary-General's reporting obligations to the relevant organs of the United Nations, including drafting of all reports on

peace-keeping operations to the Security Council and, where appropriate, to the General Assembly.

2.13 The subprogramme will ensure a comprehensive approach, encompassing all factors relevant to its objective of ensuring the success of operations. It will be linked closely with the activities of subprogrammes 2.3, Field administration and logistics support, and 2.4, Planning, and will contribute on substantive issues to the activities related to field administration and logistics support. Its contribution is central to the activities of the policy and analysis and lessons-learned unit of subprogramme 2.1. The Office will coordinate closely with the other relevant departments in the Secretariat, as well as with the United Nations Development Programme, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other agencies, as required.

2.14 The subprogramme will provide sound and timely direction and management to existing operations, maintain preparedness to handle unforeseen surges in peace-keeping, which can result at any time from international crises, and develop and update standard procedures for operations.

Subprogramme 2.3 Field administration and logistics support

2.15 The objective of the subprogramme is to provide administrative and logistics support to peace-keeping operations, as well as to field mission activities undertaken under programme 1, Political affairs, programme 19, Humanitarian affairs, and other programmes and subprogrammes. The subprogramme is implemented by the Field Administration and Logistics Division.

2.16 The subprogramme will focus greater efforts in the areas of programme planning, analysis and evaluation of mission financial management; enhance the calibre of staff provided to peace-keeping operations and improve timeliness of deployment of personnel; and enhance capacity by providing the necessary equipment, supplies and administrative infrastructures.

2.17 This subprogramme will enhance coordination within the Department in areas of resources planning, financial management and liquidation support to field missions; in the timely identification of civilian personnel requirements for field missions, review and verification of all claims relating to peace-keeping operations, including claims from troop-contributing countries; and in the enhancement of efficiency through standardization of specifications and procedures, development of guidelines and improving preparedness through training and more systematic assets management.

Subprogramme 2.4 Planning

2.18 The main objective of this subprogramme will be to undertake mission planning, demining, medical support and training, as well as to provide advice and develop guidelines for the training and administration of civilian police, including the preparation of the concept of the civilian police component of peace-keeping operations. The subprogramme will be implemented by the Planning Division, which will prepare comprehensive operational plans and timetables for new and ongoing peace-keeping operations and other field missions, and propose revisions and modifications to plans, as required; determine, at the programme

level, and as necessary with other entities of the United Nations system, the detailed requirements of new peace-keeping operations and other field missions; and examine the implications of changes in the mandates of existing operations in terms of personnel, equipment and cost. It will analyse and assess information gathered from ongoing and closed missions in order to draw lessons for future and ongoing operations and will maintain and strengthen the standby arrangements system with Governments for the supply of peace-keeping personnel, equipment, financial resources and other services.

2.19 Another objective of the subprogramme will be to provide advice and to develop guidelines for the employment, conditions of service, training and administration of civilian police in peace-keeping operations; to prepare the concept of operations for the civilian police component of operations; and to maintain liaison with Permanent Missions on agreements with Governments concerning the provision of police for service with the United Nations. In undertaking activities related to medical support, the subprogramme will provide advice on all medical matters related to peace-keeping operations; provide medical support during a mission's start-up phase and during its liquidation, and provide a temporary Force Medical Officer and/or Special Medical Adviser in cases of unforeseen events and difficulties in a mission area. It will perform medical reconnaissance, on the basis of which it will provide guidance to potential troop contributors on specific health threats to be expected in the area of operations. It will verify the need for all requests from the field for procurement of medical supplies and medical equipment.

2.20 A further objective of the subprogramme will be to advise on all training matters related to peace-keeping operations; to prepare guidelines, manuals and other training materials to assist Member States in preparing their civilian, police and military personnel for peace-keeping operations in a standardized and cost-effective manner; to help Member States (through the United Nations training assistance team programme) with the organization, assessment and conduct of peace-keeping training; and to train personnel before deployment to a peace-keeping operation.

2.21 This subprogramme will further develop the standby arrangements system and the Organization's capacity to respond quickly to crises, and will further develop the recently initiated lessons-learned activities. It will develop and make available a standby database of personnel, including police officers from contributing Member States ready for immediate deployment; standardize specific training procedures as pre-deployment requisites; standardize operational procedures for United Nations civilian police in all missions; develop the capacity to assist in lessons-learned in regard to civilian police matters; have experienced staff work together with mission planning and advise on matters related to United Nations civilian police in the development of mission concepts; develop a central United Nations medical depot for the supply of medical equipment and consumables to all United Nations mission areas; establish, in cooperation with the United Nations Medical Service, a medical database to include all epidemiological information in order to improve prevention, management and control of diseases in peace-keeping mission areas; and develop a system of pre-deployment medical information and training, including new training programmes for the United Nations medical staff of troop-contributing countries. It will refine and develop the coordination role of

United Nations Headquarters in the conduct of peace-keeping training. The subprogramme will provide in three broad areas a full range of strategic guidance, doctrine and common standards that will enhance cohesion and effectiveness of training; training material and teaching aids to support national training programmes; and expert training assistance through the development of regional pools of trained instructors.

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Programme 3. Outer space affairs

CONTENTS

	Paragraphs	Page
Programme 3. Outer space affairs	3.1 - 3.9	2
Subprogramme:		
3.1 Outer space affairs	3.5 - 3.9	3

96-11674 (E) 090596 110596

3.1 The overall objective of programme 3, Outer space affairs, is to promote international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space by assisting and collaborating with Member States, in particular developing countries, organizations within the United Nations system, national and international space-related organizations and the private sector in the areas of space science and technology with emphasis on the application of space technology for sustainable development.

3.2 The Office for Outer Space Affairs will be responsible for the implementation of this programme and the achievement of its objectives. The corresponding programme under the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, as revised, was programme 8, Peaceful uses of outer space.

3.3 The mandate of the programme lies in the responsibilities entrusted to the Secretariat by the General Assembly, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, its Legal Subcommittee and Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and their subsidiary bodies.

3.4 The broad approach and direction to be followed under this programme will be as follows:

(a) The provision of parliamentary services to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, which serves as a focal point for international cooperation in space activities, its Legal Subcommittee and Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and their subsidiary bodies, and the Working Group of the Whole on the space-related agenda items of the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly;

(b) The provision of assistance to the legislative bodies in their role as a focal point for international cooperation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space, through the promotion of the applications of space technology for economic and social development and management of the environment;

(c) The provision of assistance in formulation and adoption of legal instruments and standards relating to the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space and consideration of legal implications of space activities;

(d) The promotion of coordination and cooperation in space activities within the United Nations system and provision of secretariat services to the annual Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities;

(e) The planning and implementation of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, including conducting technical assistance and capacity-building activities;

(f) The implementation of the recommendations of the First and Second United Nations Conferences on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the space-related recommendations of other recent United Nations conferences, as well as support in the preparation of a third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space;

(g) The maintenance, on behalf of the Secretary-General, of the United Nations public register of information furnished in accordance with article IV of the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space and the dissemination of such information to Member States;

(h) The analysis of space-related issues and emerging trends, including the relationships between space science and technology and socio-economic development at the national, regional and global levels;

(i) The collection and dissemination of space-related information.

Subprogramme 3.1 Outer space affairs

3.5 A major objective of the subprogramme will be to provide Member States and space-related governmental and non-governmental organizations with information, expertise and other requirements necessary for expanding international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space and contributing to the development of international space law. This will enhance international cooperation in the application of space technology for peaceful purposes and in scientific space research and ensure that the benefits of space activities are available to all countries. This will support the objectives defined in the Agenda for Peace (A/47/277-S/24111) and the Agenda for Development (A/48/935), as well as in the report of the Secretary-General on international cooperation in space activities for enhancing security in the post-cold-war era (A/48/221).

3.6 A second major objective of the subprogramme is to strengthen the national and regional capacities of developing countries in the applications of space technology and to enhance cooperation between developed and developing countries in space science and technology through the implementation of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, the mandate of which was expanded by the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The Secretariat, in close collaboration with Member States and with other international organizations, will continue to undertake training and fellowship programmes and to provide technical advisory services in the planning, implementation and evaluation of technical assistance projects. Other major activities will include implementation of follow-up projects to the activities of the subprogramme and pilot projects in various areas such as remote sensing, satellite communication, satellite meteorology and basic space science, and the provision of assistance to the regional centres for space science and technology education affiliated with the United Nations.

3.7 A third objective of the subprogramme will be to deepen the understanding of the international community of ongoing space activities and of the role that space technology can play in economic and social development by promoting the establishment of global databases to enhance policy-planning capacities. To that end, the Secretariat will continue to maintain and improve the International Space Information System (ISIS) by issuing various space-related publications and by utilizing computer technology to disseminate information. ISIS will provide information on the results of the follow-up and pilot projects mentioned above and other activities of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, as well as other space programmes, in accordance with existing intergovernmental agreements.

3.8 A fourth objective of the subprogramme will be to increase the use of space technology within the Organization for conducting activities in a more efficient and cost-effective manner. It will therefore aim further to promote cooperation and coordination among organizations within the United Nations system in various space activities and to implement space-related recommendations of recent United Nations conferences.

3.9 Implementation of the activities of the subprogramme is expected to result in

(a) Enhanced international cooperation in space activities at the global, regional and local levels;

(b) The formulation and adoption by Member States of legal instruments and standards governing space and space activities;

(c) Improving the indigenous capabilities among Member States for utilizing space technology for economic and social development;

(d) Improved capabilities for the study and analysis of measures for expanding international cooperation in space activities, in particular through the exchange of space-related information.

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Programme 4. Legal affairs

CONTENTS

	Paragraphs	Page
Programme 4. Legal affairs	4.1 - 4.33	2
Subprogrammes:		
4.1 Overall direction, management and coordination of legal advice and services to the United Nations as a whole	4.6 - 4.10	3
4.2 General legal services to United Nations organs and programmes	4.11 - 4.14	4
4.3 Progressive development and codification of international law	4.15 - 4.18	5
4.4 Law of the sea and ocean affairs	4.19 - 4.26	6
4.5 Progressive harmonization and unification of the law of international trade	4.27 - 4.30	7
4.6 Custody, registration and publication of treaties	4.31 - 4.33	7

96-11680 (E) 130596 150596

4.1 The overall objectives of this programme are to provide a unified central legal service for the Secretariat and the principal and other organs of the United Nations, to contribute to the progressive development and codification of international public and trade law, to promote the strengthening and development as well as the effective implementation of the international legal order for the seas and oceans, to register and publish treaties, and to perform the depositary functions of the Secretary-General. The Office of Legal Affairs seeks to achieve this through the provision of legal services on questions of international and national, public, private, procedural and administrative law, by providing substantive secretariat functions to United Nations bodies and by contributing to the understanding, acceptance and consistent application of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and related implementing Agreements, through the expeditious processing and publication of treaty-related actions and treaties registered and deposited, and by providing assistance to Member States in matters related to treaty law.

4.2 The Office of Legal Affairs is responsible for the implementation of this programme and for the achievement of its objectives.

4.3 The mandate for the programme derives from the responsibilities entrusted to it by the Secretary-General and other units of the Secretariat and the principal decision-making organs of the United Nations in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the Statute of the International Court of Justice.

4.4 The broad approaches and direction to be followed under this programme will be as follows:

(a) Ensuring the rule of law in and through the United Nations and the proper and orderly conduct of business by its organs;

(b) The provision of legal services to and liaison between Headquarters and United Nations organs, United Nations offices and field and peace-keeping missions, including maintaining respect for privileges and immunities and the legal status of the Organization;

(c) The discharge of the Secretary-General's responsibilities under the Statute of the International Court of Justice, except those of a budgetary nature;

(d) The provision of legal assistance and advice to Secretariat staff worldwide relating to the provision of goods, services and facilities to the Organization and its missions, and the resolution of legal disputes involving the Organization, including the representation of the Secretary-General in judicial proceedings, negotiations or other procedures;

(e) The provision of secretariat services for the Sixth Committee of the General Assembly, the International Law Commission, the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law and other committees or conferences dealing with legal matters;

(f) The preparation of the Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs, a record of the practice of the General Assembly in procedural matters, publications on legal matters and studies to assist the progressive development and codification of international law and the law of international trade;

(g) The provision of assistance in the teaching, study, dissemination and wider appreciation of international law and the law of international trade;

(h) The provision of information, analysis, advice and assistance to States on law of the sea and ocean affairs, consistent with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea;

(i) The monitoring, review and analysis of and reporting on developments relating to the law of the sea and ocean affairs, including persistent and emerging issues, as well as the formulation of recommendations thereon;

(j) The provision of substantive servicing of the relevant institutions and intergovernmental bodies as mandated by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the General Assembly and the fulfilment of the Secretary-General's responsibilities with respect to dispute settlement;

(k) The strengthening and expansion of cooperation and coordination among relevant international organizations in the field of the law of the sea and ocean affairs;

(l) The discharge of the Secretariat's responsibilities under Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations on the registration and publication of treaties, including through the adoption of electronic publishing techniques, and the Secretary-General's responsibilities as the depositary for multilateral conventions.

4.5 During the plan period, this programme will provide legal advice and services of great importance in connection with a wide range of questions dealt with by the decision-making organs of the United Nations and its Member States. It will strengthen respect within the United Nations for the rule of law in international relations, in particular, observance of the Charter and the resolutions, decisions, rules, regulations and treaties emanating from the Organization.

Subprogrammes

Subprogramme 4.1 Overall direction, management and coordination of legal advice and services to the United Nations as a whole

4.6 The main objective of this subprogramme is to assist the principal organs of the United Nations by providing legal advice on complex and often politically sensitive questions. This applies in particular to the interpretation of the Charter, resolutions and regulations of the United Nations, treaties and questions of public international law. Peace-keeping and other operations, missions and good-offices will present this subprogramme with legal questions involving the use of force, privileges and immunities, and third-party

liability. One specific objective for the plan period is to sustain the evolution of legal arrangements in support of the United Nations efforts to maintain international peace and security. This subprogramme is implemented by the Office of the Legal Counsel.

4.7 Another objective of this subprogramme is to assist the meetings of principal organs of the United Nations and the cycle of conferences by providing legal services, including advice on constitutional and procedural and credentials matters. A related objective is the preparation of draft rules of procedure and the assessment of questions relating to representation of States to the United Nations.

4.8 A further objective of this subprogramme is to ensure that as subsidiary organs of the United Nations, the International Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda operate in accordance with United Nations rules, regulations and policies, and that as judicial organs they act independently of States and the Security Council. In the framework of this subprogramme, the Office of Legal Affairs advises the Security Council on legal aspects of the activities of the Tribunals and advises the Tribunals on their relationship with third States, relevant peace-keeping operations and the host countries.

4.9 The activities and assistance delivered by the United Nations in the territories of Member States require attention to questions concerning the privileges and immunities of the Organization and relations with host Governments. An important objective is the negotiation and finalization of legal arrangements to regulate the status and activities of United Nations offices.

4.10 It is anticipated that during the plan period this subprogramme will enhance the effectiveness of the principal and subsidiary organs of the United Nations and of peace-keeping and other missions by ensuring that their work is carried out in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, other relevant international agreements and rules, resolutions and decisions of competent decision-making organs of the United Nations.

Subprogramme 4.2 General legal services to United Nations organs and programmes

4.11 A major objective of this subprogramme is to assist the Organization (Headquarters, the regional commissions, other United Nations offices away from Headquarters and peace-keeping and other missions) and other United Nations organizations in day-to-day administration of their mandates and programmes through the provision of legal services. These involve (a) participation in meetings of secretariat bodies, such as the Committee on Contracts, the Staff Management Coordination Committee, the Property Survey Board, the Claims Board and so on; and (b) interpretation of certain Articles of the Charter, General Assembly resolutions and decisions, the regulations, rules and other administrative issuances of the Organization and the mandates of programmes and activities in which United Nations organs and bodies are engaged. This subprogramme is implemented by the General Legal Division of the Office of Legal Affairs.

4.12 Other important objectives of this subprogramme are to provide legal services and support for (a) the peace-keeping operations of the Organization in the contracting for air, land and sea transportation, for rations and logistical support and for personnel and equipment and resolution of related disputes; (b) the Organization's expanded contracting requirements and the reform of procurement; and (c) the separately funded programmes, funds and offices of the United Nations in connection with the negotiation of new agreements for the establishment of programmes of cooperation for development, as well as for the development of new institutional modalities for operational activities and initiatives to counter epidemics and other hazards.

4.13 Additional objectives of this subprogramme are to provide legal services and support for the regulations, rules and other administrative issuances of the Organization and the revisions to the system of personnel appraisal. One specific objective of this subprogramme is to provide representation of the Secretary-General before the Administrative Tribunal and representation of the Organization before other judicial and arbitral bodies.

4.14 The subprogramme is expected to protect the legal rights of the Organization and to minimize and resolve legal disputes and other legal difficulties that arise with regard to the operations of the Organization and to assist with the development and implementation of the Organization's administrative law consistent with the needs and interests of the Organization.

Subprogramme 4.3 Progressive development and codification of international law

4.15 The objectives of the subprogramme are (a) to promote the acceptance of and respect for the principles of international law and to encourage the progressive development and codification of international law; and (b) to encourage the dissemination and wider appreciation of international law. The subprogramme is implemented by the Codification Division of the Office of Legal Affairs.

4.16 The first objective requires providing United Nations bodies dealing with international law, including the Sixth Committee of the General Assembly, the International Law Commission, codification conferences and special committees established on the recommendation of the Sixth Committee with substantive support, including, inter alia, the conduct of research on topics of international law, the compiling of background documentation, the preparation of draft reports of a substantive nature of the bodies concerned, as well as assistance in the conduct of proceedings and the drafting of resolutions, decisions, amendments, proposals and so on.

4.17 The second objective requires monitoring the implementation of the Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law and ensuring the preparation and issuance of legal publications, including the Yearbook of the International Law Commission, the United Nations Juridical Yearbook, the Legislative Series and the Reports of International Arbitral Awards.

4.18 It is expected that a number of drafts will be placed before the General Assembly as a result of the activities of the subsidiary legal bodies referred

to above and that those drafts will serve as a basis for the elaboration by the General Assembly (Sixth Committee) of conventions, declarations, resolutions or guidelines on legal topics. The publications listed above will be issued on a yearly basis or at intervals depending on the availability of material. Assistance in the form of fellowships, seminars and United Nations legal publications will be provided, in particular to developing countries.

Subprogramme 4.4 Law of the sea and ocean affairs

4.19 The mandate for this subprogramme lies in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the implementing Agreements, in decisions taken by meetings of States parties to the Convention and by the General Assembly, in particular its resolution 49/28 of 6 December 1994 adopted upon the entry into force of the Convention. This subprogramme is to be implemented by the Division of Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea.

4.20 The first objective of the subprogramme is to promote the universal acceptance of the Convention and its uniform and consistent application. To that end, information, analysis and advice will be provided on the Convention and the Agreements, their status and state practice relating thereto.

4.21 A second objective is to assist States and international organizations in the development of legal instruments in the field of law of the sea and ocean affairs in harmony with the provisions of the Convention.

4.22 A third objective is to assist in the effective functioning of the treaty system of institutions. This will be accomplished by providing servicing to meetings of States parties and to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf, and by providing legal assistance to the International Seabed Authority. Assistance will also be provided to the dispute-settlement mechanisms set forth by the Convention, including the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea.

4.23 A fourth objective is to assist Member States in identifying emerging aspects of marine affairs within the framework of the Convention, by analysing areas requiring action, organizing groups of experts for the purpose of formulating appropriate responses to emerging needs and servicing multilateral consultations and negotiations so as to contribute to the progressive development and codification of international law.

4.24 A fifth objective is to assist Member States in their efforts to derive practical benefits from the international legal regime for the oceans. In this area, emphasis will be given to developing and strengthening the capabilities of States, including institutional infrastructure, as well as human, technical and financial resources.

4.25 Finally, a sixth objective is to respond to the expressed need of the international community for the annual consideration, review and evaluation of continuing developments related to the law of the sea and ocean affairs in the General Assembly through the monitoring and analysis of and reporting on developments relating to the law of the sea and ocean affairs, including legal, political, economic, technological and scientific developments.

4.26 This subprogramme is expected to contribute to a wider acceptance of the Convention, a higher degree of uniformity and consistency in its application and its more effective implementation, as well as to enhanced capabilities of States to derive the fullest benefits under the comprehensive international legal regime for the seas and oceans.

Subprogramme 4.5 Progressive harmonization and unification of the law of international trade

4.27 A major objective of this subprogramme is to provide Governments and legislators with universally acceptable, modern and harmonized treaties and model laws in areas where harmonization of commercial law is desirable and feasible, and also to provide commercial parties with non-legislative texts (e.g. model clauses, rules and legal guides) to assist them in implementing international transactions. This subprogramme is implemented by the International Trade Law Branch.

4.28 A further major objective is to meet the increased demand of Governments for training and technical assistance regarding enactment of legal texts of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (e.g. on settlement of disputes, public procurement, electronic data interchange, international payments) by assisting in preparation of legislation, briefing officials, conducting seminars and assisting Governments, professional associations and academic institutions, in particular in developing countries and countries in transition, to improve the teaching of international trade law (e.g. by co-sponsoring educational events and helping to develop teaching programmes).

4.29 Another objective is to provide training and assistance, in conjunction with regional organizations, to foster regional harmonization of trade laws on the basis of universal texts. A further objective is to monitor the work of other international organizations active in international trade law so as to avoid duplication in their activities and to prevent inconsistencies in the results of their work. A complementary objective is to provide users of texts of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law with information on the judicial and arbitral application and interpretation of those texts. Such information is made available, in all United Nations languages, in the form of abstracts of court decisions and arbitral awards.

4.30 This subprogramme is expected to facilitate the globalization of commerce and finance, with their increasingly complex cross-border transactions, by reducing legal obstacles posed by inadequate and disparate laws.

Subprogramme 4.6 Custody, registration and publication of treaties

4.31 The recent expansion of the Organization's membership and the rapid multiplication of international legislative activity has resulted in the increase in the nature, quantity and complexity of the tasks performed by this subprogramme. With a view to dealing effectively with the accumulated and current workload and pursuant to a General Assembly mandate, a major computerization programme is under way. This subprogramme is implemented by the Treaty Section.

4.32 The key objectives of the subprogramme are:

(a) To perform the depositary functions of the Secretary-General (for over 440 multilateral treaties) and the registration functions of the Secretariat and also to facilitate the provision of timely and accurate information relating to the agreements registered with the Secretariat (over 40,000 at the end of 1995);

(b) To provide assistance and advice to Member States, United Nations bodies and other entities on the technical aspects of treaty making and on treaty law.

4.33 In furthering these objectives, it is essential to complete the computerization programme and in particular:

(a) To develop a comprehensive electronic database containing all depositary and registration information and disseminate electronically treaty- and treaty law-related information from the database, including on-line access;

(b) To implement an electronic workflow system employing desktop publishing to address the existing printing backlog;

(c) Through further training, to develop a highly motivated, competent and professional work force and to explore innovative approaches such as off-site working, machine-aided electronic translation and the listing of treaties under different headings.

4.34 This subprogramme is expected to result in the expeditious processing and publication, including by electronic means, of treaty-related actions and treaties registered and deposited.

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Programme 5. Policy coordination and sustainable development

CONTENTS

	Paragraphs	Page
Programme 5. Policy coordination and sustainable development	5.1 - 5.11	2
Subprogrammes:		
5.1 Policy coordination and inter-agency cooperation ..	5.5	3
5.2 Advancement of women	5.6 - 5.7	3
5.3 Social development	5.8 - 5.9	4
5.4 Sustainable development	5.10 - 5.11	5

96-11686 (E) 130596 150596

5.1 The overall orientation of the programme is to facilitate better integration and coordination of the work of the United Nations in the economic and social spheres by providing support to the central policy-making bodies and coordination processes on the various aspects of development. The mandate for the programme derives from the Secretariat's responsibility to provide support to the General Assembly, in particular its Second and Third Committees, the Economic and Social Council and relevant subsidiary bodies, relevant resolutions concerning international economic cooperation, resolutions on the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields, including, in particular, General Assembly resolutions 47/212 A and B, of 23 December 1992 and 6 May 1993 respectively, on the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations, as well as from relevant aspects of the mandate of the Secretary-General, including his responsibilities as the Chairman of the Administrative Committee on Coordination.

5.2 The programme is under the responsibility of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development.

5.3 The work of the Department helps Member States to develop agreed standards, policies and programmes on issues arising from globalization of environmental and social problems and from the marginalization of certain disadvantaged groups. It also deals with certain aspects of democratization such as the advancement of women and the involvement of new global actors, for example, members of civil society, in the policy-making and standard-setting initiatives of the international community.

5.4 By the end of the period covered by the plan, it is expected that the Department would have accomplished the following:

(a) Strengthened the role of the Organization as a forum for debate and consensus-building in the economic and social spheres;

(b) Provided effective support to standing political processes and relevant ad hoc processes for the development of integrated and coordinated policy responses to development issues and to emerging global problems, for the negotiation of global agreements on norms, standards and cooperative actions, and for the enhancement of the effectiveness of operational activities for development;

(c) Promoted and monitored, as appropriate, the implementation of agreed plans, strategies, programmes or platforms for action, including the outcome of United Nations conferences for which the Department has responsibility;

(d) Enhanced policy coherence and coordination both within the United Nations and amongst United Nations system organizations;

(e) Strengthened linkages between the United Nations and civil society and developed innovative means of cooperation and modes of partnership in areas of common interest, including operational activities for development at the country level;

(f) Increased awareness of United Nations work in the economic and social spheres and related fields.

Subprogramme 5.1 Policy coordination and inter-agency cooperation

5.5 The objectives of this subprogramme, which is implemented by the Division for Policy Coordination and Economic and Social Council Affairs, are:

(a) To develop proposals and provide support to central intergovernmental bodies for the integrated and coordinated policy responses to issues of development and to emerging global problems in the economic and social fields;

(b) To facilitate and promote greater cooperation and collaboration among the organizations of the United Nations system active in the economic and social areas;

(c) To enhance opportunities for dialogue among the different elements of civil society and to increase the Organization's capacity to serve as a focal point for the non-governmental organizations with consultative status with the United Nations and to improve coordination of non-governmental organization activities so as to avoid duplication and ensure complementarity;

(d) To promote and strengthen coherence and reform within the United Nations system in the area of operational activities for development. To that end, the Department will seek to improve the efficiency and effectiveness, coherence and coordination of operational activities of the system at the country level, in particular those financed on a grant basis in support of development efforts, and to encourage integration with national efforts through such approaches as a programme approach, national execution and country strategy notes, at the request of the recipient Governments;

(e) To provide efficient and effective technical secretariat services to central intergovernmental bodies and major United Nations conferences in the economic, social and related areas through, inter alia, improvement in the planning, forecasting, editing and monitoring of the documentation prepared in those areas.

Subprogramme 5.2 Advancement of women

5.6 The subprogramme, which is implemented by the Division for the Advancement of Women, will seek to achieve effective support for the implementation of actions contained in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women, including through expanded interaction with civil society. To that end, within its mandate as set out in chapter V of the Platform and other intergovernmental decisions, the subprogramme will build on its nodal position within the Organization to promote mainstreaming of gender concerns, reflecting a rights-based approach centred on equality between women and men, and to ensure accountability among all actors responsible for implementing the Platform.

5.7 More specifically, the objectives of the subprogramme are:

(a) To monitor the extent to which the gender dimension is reflected and acted upon within relevant intergovernmental forums and in policies and programmes of United Nations system organizations; and to analyse and develop as required policy issues of increasing importance or which may be emerging as global trends, as well as to facilitate the debate of intergovernmental bodies, especially the Commission on the Status of Women and the Economic and Social Council;

(b) To improve the monitoring of the extent of women's enjoyment of their human rights and of whether violations of those rights are dealt with by all human rights mechanisms;

(c) To contribute to the development and strengthening of human rights mechanisms, including the optional protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, or the increased use of existing mechanisms;

(d) To monitor the implementation of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women and to facilitate the intergovernmental monitoring of system-wide implementation of commitments under the Platform for Action;

(e) To design and maintain a system of information with specialized constituencies related to the Platform for Action.

Subprogramme 5.3 Social development

5.8 The subprogramme, which is implemented by the Division for Social Policy and Development, will seek to strengthen international cooperation for social development, with particular attention to the three core issues of poverty eradication, employment-generation and social integration, in the context of the comprehensive and detailed framework of commitments and policies for action by Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations provided by the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development.

5.9 More specifically, the objectives of the subprogramme are:

(a) To facilitate intergovernmental dialogue on social issues and trends and their policy implications in support of the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action. The subprogramme will promote common norms, policies and cooperative actions aimed at facilitating the realization in an integrated manner of the Social Summit's objectives, and will develop integrated approaches to issues that cut across the economic, social and cultural domains, with particular emphasis on the contribution to social cohesion of policies to reduce poverty and generate employment. The subprogramme will also contribute to the efforts by the United Nations system for the eradication of poverty, in the context of both the Social Summit's objectives and activities related to the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006);

(b) To promote the implementation and coordinate the preparation and monitoring of United Nations declarations and programmes of action relevant to social development, such as the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, the World Plan of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond and the International Year of Older Persons in 1999. These activities relate principally to the integration into society of groups who, because of their vulnerability or lack of power, are not participating fully in the life of the community;

(c) To strengthen participation of and cooperation among all actors concerned with social development (Governments at all levels, all elements of civil society and the private sector) in promoting national objectives and internationally agreed norms.

Subprogramme 5.4 Sustainable development

5.10 Taking into account the outcome of the 1997 special session of the General Assembly that will review progress achieved since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the subprogramme will ensure the effective and coordinated implementation of Agenda 21 and other commitments made during the Conference, including the outcomes of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, and will increase interaction to that end with actors of civil society.

5.11 More specifically, the objectives of the subprogramme, which is implemented by the Division for Sustainable Development, are:

(a) To promote the implementation of Agenda 21 and other commitments of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, including the outcomes of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, and the achievement of sustainable development world wide;

(b) To identify new issues to be brought to the attention of the Commission for its consideration, including the assessment of new critical areas of sustainability, for instance, consumption and production patterns as an umbrella concept encompassing environmental and economic factors. To that end, the subprogramme will continue to develop a comprehensive framework to integrate better the social, economic and environmental aspects of sustainable development. Within that context a strong emphasis will be placed not only on the integration of relevant sectoral and cross-sectoral components of Agenda 21, but also on incorporating into that framework the results of other major United Nations conferences held in recent years;

(c) To monitor the implementation of sustainable development goals through the assessment of data collected at the national, regional and international levels, and to complete work (in cooperation with other United Nations and non-United Nations entities) on indicators of sustainable development and their application. The Secretariat will also continue to serve as a custodian of data provided by the Member States through national reports. Emphasis will be placed on facilitating the access of Governments and non-State actors to information, in electronic form, related to the follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development;

(d) To strengthen coordinated approaches towards implementing sustainable development among the organizations of the United Nations system through the Inter-Agency Committee for Sustainable Development, for which the Division provides the secretariat. In that capacity the Division will seek to (a) to integrate the concept of sustainable development into the work of all relevant United Nations organizations; and (b) to coordinate the monitoring of the implementation of various parts of Agenda 21 to which different bodies of the United Nations, including the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, have been assigned the functions of task managers;

(e) To promote a dialogue with and involvement of major groups in the work of the Commission and in sustainable development activities in general.